



## Grant Making Frequently Asked Questions

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### What is the Neighborhood Safety Fund (NSF)?

The NSF is a donor-advised fund of the Cleveland Foundation, established through a partnership with the City of Cleveland. This fund, seeded with a \$10 million investment in 2023, will perpetually invest in evidence-based interventions and solutions to reduce violence and promote safety across the City of Cleveland.

### Who can apply for the Grant?

501c3 organizations working on a mission to intervene and prevent community violence. Organizations without 501c3 status are eligible to apply using a fiscal agent with the capacity to support and are financially healthy with the current 990 forms on file.

### How Do I Apply for the Grant?

Applications will be accepted on the [Cleveland Foundation](#) website Grants Gateway portal beginning October 9, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. No paper applications will be accepted.

### What is the Application Period?

The application will be open from Oct. 9, 2023, through 11:59 p.m. on Nov. 15, 2023.

### What is the Implementation period?

The Funding Period will be December 2023 – December 2024.

### How many applicants will be awarded?

The number of grants will be determined based on the application pool and the recommendations from the NSF Advisory Committee. The goal is to distribute \$1M in 2023.

### What costs are allowable and unallowable?

Grants *should be* for violence prevention efforts, including but not limited to:

- Capital updates or other needs.
- Staffing,
- Direct services
- Strategic direction
- Supplementing existing programs, interventions, and initiatives
- Piloting evidence-informed and community-centered programs

Grants *should not be used for* punitive enforcement strategies, policing equipment, or tactics.

### Who would I discuss a potential conflict of interest with one of the Advisory Committee members?

You should include the Advisory Committee member's name in the section asking for any additional information you should share. Conflict does not disqualify you. The Committee member with the conflict will not vote on your proposal.

**Can your organization be its fiscal agent if long-term organization with strong budgetary controls?**

Only organizations with a 501c3 status are eligible to apply. If your organization does not have 501c3 IRS status, they must apply using a healthy fiscal agent with a 501c3 status. If you need help finding a fiscal agent, please get in touch with [dtoney@clevefdn.org](mailto:dtoney@clevefdn.org)

**How should organizations proceed if they serve young adults within the entire county?**

Choose the neighborhoods where you have the most participants and then explain your service area reach in the section, allowing more detail.

**What is the distinction between an organization and a grassroots organization?**

A grassroots organization is defined as mobilization that comes from the ground up and every day, people come together to address an issue in their community and take action to advocate for change.

**Is there a maximum amount we can apply for?**

Grant awards will range from \$10,000 to \$75,000. The Advisory Committee does have the authority to grant outside of this range.

**Are churches eligible to apply?**

Churches applying for programming aligned with the City of Cleveland's violence, intervention, and prevention strategy are eligible with a 501c3 status or a healthy fiscal agent.

**If funded, will there be any data reporting or evaluation requirements?**

There will be a reporting and evaluation process requiring signature with acceptance of your award.

**Can we use any grant funds to pay for evaluation activities?**

Yes, evaluation activities are eligible uses of funds.

**Can an organization request funding for indirect and administrative costs?** Funding is open for general operations that allow for capacity building, which includes administrative costs. **If so, are those costs capped at any level?** There is no cap. Defining the indirect and administrative costs in the budget narrative is recommended.

**The RFP mentions out-of-school-time for young adults. Could it fund out-of-school time programming for k-5, pr k-8?**

Yes, out-of-school time programming for all age groups is eligible for funds.

**Do we need letters of support from community leaders and organizations?**

Letters of support are not required but can be excellent forms of community and resident engagement while offering testimony about programmatic/intervention impact or need.

**What do you attach if you are a new 501c3 and do not have an audit or a financial statement?**

New 501c3s with no financial history should utilize a healthy fiscal agent.

**How do you explain New Programs versus Existing Programming?**

New programs should identify proof of concept, how the organization engaged community voice in starting services, and the intended impact.

Existing programs should identify the target population served, the impact of services, and how funds will help the organization.

**What if you have been doing everything out of pocket and you don't have a partner?**

You can set up a technical assistance session by reaching out to [dtoney@clevefdn.org](mailto:dtoney@clevefdn.org).

**Are there restrictions on types of equipment or construction/building costs?**

Grants funds shall not be used to fund:

- Any intended punishment or penalties
- Projects not aligned with the City's strategy.
- And NSF funds cannot be the project-only funding source.

**To apply as part of a consortium, do we have to use it all together as one or individually?**

Strong proposals are collaborative, with only one application per consortium. One organization will need to serve as the fiscal agent. The proposal should clearly distinguish the services of each organization and how they will work together in consortia.

**Does a consortium budget need to break down the services provided by each organization and the dollar amount allocated for those services?**

Yes, and it should align with the services delivered by each member organization. The total budget or grant request does not have to be split equally amongst the partners.

**Is there a size of the organization's budget that is too big for this Grant?**

The organization should meet the definition of a grassroots organization. This is defined as mobilization that comes from the ground up, and every day, people come together to address an issue in their community and take action to advocate for change. Grassroots organizations will be prioritized.

**How should we show we have funding after the one-year Grant?**

Organizations should include any additional funding sources, including those funds earmarked for specific purposes. Organizations with no other funding sources are not eligible to apply.

**What is acceptable evidence-based content? How do you define evidence-based? Does the program need to be formally evaluated?**

Programs do not need a third-party formal evaluation at this time. Organizations should speak to how the services positively influence the target audience in intervening and or preventing community violence. Any evidence of impact and improvement can be shared.

**Are organizations able to partner with the Armed Forces and local government?**

Applicants may partner with any organizations that support the outcomes of the program. However, grants *should not be used for* punitive enforcement strategies, policing equipment, or tactics.

**Is this Grant available for surrounding cities and communities of the City of Cleveland, i.e., Garfield Heights, Maple Heights, Warrensville Heights, and East Cleveland?**

The grants are for programs, intervention and initiatives serving City of Cleveland residents.

**Do we have to present our idea/project to the Cleveland Foundation?**

You only need to complete the online application via The Cleveland Foundations grants portal. You will not need to submit anything additional to the Cleveland Foundation.

**What do you attach if the IRS does not require 501c3 to submit a 990?**

501c3s must file either a Form 990 or Form 990-EZ each year, or they risk going out of compliance with IRS and having tax-exempt status suspended.

- Nonprofit organizations with gross receipts of less than \$200,000 and total assets of less than \$500,000 can file Form 990-EZ or Form 990.
- Nonprofits with gross receipts of \$200,000 or more or total assets of \$500,000 or more must file Form 990.

**Do you require the submission of Form 990 for the last three years or one for the previous three years?**

You only need to submit your last filed 990

**If an organization has multiple partners and programs, can one agency be the lead on numerous applications, or should one of the partners be the primary applicant?**

Yes, an organization can be included in multiple grant submissions. The role of each participating organization should be clear.

**Can you be a lead applicant and a partner on another organization's applicant?**

Yes, an organization can be included in multiple grant submissions. The role of each participating organization should be clear.

**Does building space include rent?**

Building space does include rent. You should be able to explain how you will continue rent payments beyond the one-year grant cycle.

**If you had more than one program that cost more than \$75,000, would they both qualify for funding?**

It is recommended that you apply for one program, and it should be the program/project with the highest impact on violence prevention, evidenced by your current analysis and impact goals.

**If we receive a SAMHSA reCAST grant, are we eligible to apply?**

Organizations with additional funding are encouraged to apply. List additional funding sources, including those earmarked for specific purposes.

**Can you elaborate on the kind of community buy-in you are looking for?**

Community-based/resident advisory boards for the programs, testimonials, and support letters are excellent examples of community buy-in.

**Is it a disqualifier if one of your collaborators provides grant funding to your program?**

No.

**When are funds distributed for the Grant, and what is the distribution process?**

The NSF Advisory Committee will make recommendations by December 8 with the grantee award announcement on December 15. The applying organization or fiscal agent must be set up to receive an Electronic Funds Transfer, also known as ACH. For help in setting up your ACH, contact

[ACH@clevefdn.org](mailto:ACH@clevefdn.org).